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AUTHOR Cawelti, John; And Others
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ABSTRACT

The National Humanities Faculty working papers in this document represent reports of faculty participation in humanities projects around the country and emphasize program content that might be useful to teachers developing their own humanities programs. Arleigh D. Richardson's report is a description of the program he visited and is written by the teachers who developed it. The program, geared for the average student, stresses the interrelated and values content of the humanities. The result of John Cawelti's visit to a black, inner-city school is a detailed model for an 11th grade course, "Who We Are," that would involve the whole student. Roland B. Kimball, after visiting a Connecticut high school, suggests an outline and activities for a 9th grade humanities program that centers on the life of the students' community. John Anthony Scott's report on the theme and content of an American studies course is a specific program with a human and historical orientation to be implemented by integrating literature with historical topics. John Cawelti contributes another paper: his thoughts on the construction of an integrated curriculum that would develop the basic analytic and interpretive skills of the social studies, science, and the humanities, independently, and then set up problems requiring the interworking of the different skills. (JH)

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NATIONAL HUMANITIES FACULTY WORKING PAPERS [PAPERS DESCRIBING THE CONTENT OF HUMANITIES PROGRAMS.]

BY JOHN CAWELTI AND OTHERS

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THE NATIONAL HUMANITIES FACULTY, 1266 MAIN STREET, CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01742 / (617) 369-7800

NHF WORKING PAPERS

A-108

In the course of visiting a number of American secondary schools and studying their programs in the general area of the humanities, Dr. Arleigh D. Richardson III had the good fortune to discover the work being done in an interdisciplinary humanities course at the Ipswich, Massachusetts, High School. He found it one of the most demonstrably effective and exciting educational programs in existence, where imaginative young teachers were providing magnificently for the needs of a group of students whom we have largely ignored in recent years. This group of nearly lost youngsters was finding some meaning to their existence and discovering positive ways of relating to each other and to the world. At his request, they wrote this account of humanities for the average student.

The teachers were Peter Greer (Social Studies), Joan Johnson (English), Robert J. Keefe (English), John Walker (Art), and Joanne McMahon (Music).

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THE AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES, AND THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION

Let me take you through my obstacle course as I attempted to establish a new humanities course for the non-college-bound student (though it could be true of any humanities course for any ability student). The students of our school were perhaps more vocal than some in their disapproval of what was being offered them in the curriculum. "Where is the relevance?" "Who cares about ancient history?" "Going to school is interrupting my education!" (She had obviously read McLuhan.) "My subjects are so boring!"

This student outcry stimulated me to an attempt to organize a course which taught humanely, one which combined the disciplines of social studies, English, art, and music, and which made these areas of study immediate and relevant. The path from my realization of needed change to successful implementation was as fraught with barriers as an Uncle Wiggley game.

When we finally had the approval of administration and board, four teachers (I was one) and a coordinator spent the first two weeks of a five-week summer workshop trying each to use his subject area as the base or foundation of the humanities course. After we realized the wrong-headedness of this, the final three weeks were devoted to working up appropriate themes, researching them with limited library facilities, and then integrating all four disciplines to support the themes. Concurrently, we waded through film, tape, filmstrip, paperback, and speaker catalogs to further reinforce the course material. All this was done by teachers who were limited in academic background, but certainly not in originality. After having the syllabus typed and the sixty pages collated, we made a presentation to the school board in late August. They accepted a course which consisted of five double periods each week, three themes (Nature of Prejudice, Values and the Individual, The Individual and Society), and a fourth quarter devoted to the writing and production of a student play. Our new worry: What would be the students' reaction?

The initial student reaction was fear. These students were totally unprepared for a humanities course based on participation and discussion. We also found some non-college students brighter than we had anticipated, and some students far slower than we had anticipated. To cure the former problem we spent two weeks having a student-teacher catharsis. We solved the latter problem by throwing out most of the prepared syllabus and by improvising each day -- necessitating numerous meetings at the end of the school day and long phone calls at night.

Another problem none of us had ever imagined was our colleagues' professional jealousy. The criticism which quickly (much faster than our program had been approved) went through administrative channels was of two types. First, other teachers felt it unfair that a humanities

teacher did not have to teach every day. Secondly, the students from this course were spilling their excitement, discussions, and obvious sense of freedom into other teachers' classrooms. Humanities was spoken of in the teachers' lounge as "Romper Room".

If this was not enough to cope with, we were now in conflict with the guidance department, worried about a student who might suddenly decide to go to a college. How would college admissions boards accept a course called "humanities"? Were business and technically oriented students in the course receiving the necessary English skills? In addition, we had to anticipate the reaction of the State Department of Education. Did a humanities course fulfill the State history requirement?

Well, for some reason this tale of woe ends on a successful note. Guidance may still be worried, the administration still may thwart our requests for money, and our colleagues may still rant in the teachers' lounge. But our students have favorably received this humanities course, which has shown them the interrelatedness of the disciplines of social studies, English, art, and music, a course which has been relevant and immediate. And, if we teachers of the humanities course could not stifle the criticism, the students have. Incidentally, at the end of our first year, 33 out of 60 non-college seniors went on to junior colleges and other programs of further education. Unfortunately, many left "further education" when they realized that they were back in the familiar noncaring atmosphere they had known before their work in humanities. This depressed us: we felt as an anthropologist must when he leaves the tribe (whom he wanted to help) in worse shape than he found them.

We were dealing with that most ignored segment of the American public school population -- the average student. In addition, we confronted two major factors that have been lacking in our educational system for some time -- an awareness that disciplines are interrelated and an awareness of values. The feelings of being dehumanized by job, corporation, or university and the apathy of the average American toward the arts and the misuse of leisure time can be traced to the failure of the schools to educate in these areas: to make students believe in themselves as whole individuals and to help them appreciate the value and pleasure of the arts.

The humanities program at Ipswich High School was created as one method of reaching the average student in these two crucial areas. We established some very general guidelines as to what our program would and would not attempt to do. It would be an interdisciplinary program comprising English, social studies, music, and art; it would take the place of the required subjects of English and social studies; and it would be required of all non-college-bound seniors. And we agreed upon a thematic approach to some of the major aspects of contemporary American culture.

For many years the kind of students with whom we were concerned had plagued teachers and administrators in the system. Always the questions of what the school should give these students and how best to prepare them for the reality they would face after graduation were guiltily avoided in faculty and departmental meetings. No matter how enthusiastic the teacher, no matter how helpful the administrator, there seemed to be no answer. Teachers, lacking the texts to work with because none in existence could rouse the interest of the students, were forced to use watered-down college-prep courses. Administrators pleaded with their faculty to "do something" but were unable to say just what should be done. And, meanwhile, the students themselves, having long ago lost interest in anything the school offered, chose one of two paths -- to stick it out by dulling the senses as completely as possible to a system that had nothing for them or to drop out and escape an environment that seemed hostile to them.

In setting up the program, after the teachers were selected and their summer workshop meetings had begun, we spent a great deal of time simply talking over the guidelines already established for the program and what ways we saw for each discipline to approach the course. How academic was our program to be? Some members of the staff felt that we should use this opportunity to "bring culture to the masses". But more of us felt that the kind of student we would be working with would not accept this approach, and we rejected it (one of our better moves). We do try to expand and develop cultural experience and tastes, but it is a matter of emphasis. In the final analysis, relevance takes precedence over "culture".

Another problem we faced during the workshop was integrating the disciplines. This is really a twofold problem: on the one hand we had the problem of convincing the teachers involved that at times they would have to see their particular discipline put in a position subordinate to some other or to an overall goal; on the other hand we had to convince everyone that the success of the program depended on our proving to the students that the four subjects being presented do in fact interrelate. In fact, we often spent many hours trying to prove to each other that we could interrelate. We were not creating something artificial; it was just that we too were the products of a fragmented education and found it difficult to relate to one another's disciplines.

By the end of the summer, we had a syllabus which had three basic units as its core: Nature of Prejudice, Values and the Individual, and The Individual and Society. Our fourth unit was to be a student theater production that utilized the material of the other units and the skills of all four disciplines.

In the first of our areas, Nature of Prejudice, we attempted to define prejudice and to point out its destructive and sick manifestations. We presented the problem through the Jew, the Indian, and the ethnic groups in our community, although we did center upon the Negro as a

primary example in order to give the students a vehicle or framework for understanding the problems, conflicts, conditions, and possible remedies. We hoped to leave the student with a process or approach to any problem of prejudice, a method of thinking it through, an awareness of the pitfalls, and the skills to make conclusions or decisions based on that process.

The second area, Values and the Individual, has as one objective that of helping the students realize that value systems are the reflection of a culture and that different cultures develop different value systems (though based on common concepts) because of unique factors of environment and expediency. We therefore concentrated on Oriental and Western cultures with the intention of showing that no values are absolute, but that Western values have become the model for many Eastern nations and in many cases may be traumatizing. The second and more important portion of the unit was focused on the basis for a universal value system. Within that framework the student assessed many of the values of our present culture, a process which left him the final decision as to what values he should adopt, what values he should reject, and what values he wanted to modify. The last phase of this study concentrated on an analysis of the socializing agencies which form our values, the disparity between theoretical values and actuality, and finally, an introspection into the student's own value system.

The Individual and Society, in the third quarter, is a study of the conformist as the stabilizing force and the rebel as the catalyst in society. We hoped that the student, understanding these personalities, would get some understanding of the nature of society itself and the effect society has on each individual. Stress was placed on analyzing the future relationship between the individual and mechanized society. It was hoped that the students would make a critical evaluation of the ways in which they might constructively participate in society.

The fourth quarter theater production was the summing up of the humanities course. This total departure from usual classroom procedure served the students in many ways. It gave them the opportunity to review, utilize, and demonstrate what they had learned during the year. It also enabled them to channel their interests, offering many the opportunity to exhibit skills which might go unrecognized in the regular classroom situation -- building, dressmaking, designing, lighting, make-up, original writing, and acting. The mechanics of the production were quite simple. Skits were used since they eliminated the need for skillful character development and enabled more students to participate. The students first discussed the kind of production they wanted. Once that was decided upon, the students considered possible themes to unite the skits. For example, the first year the theme was "What We Do Today Shapes Our Tomorrow". After a short experiment with play-writing, the students were quite happy to choose a smaller group to do the actual writing. After a class brainstorming session for skit ideas,

the writers began their task while the rest of the class organized into groups (make-up, props, etc.) and began to prepare for their jobs. Each day the writers' group reported to the class, reading completed skits, discussing the problems they were encountering, and asking for suggestions and criticism. A class secretary dittoed each completed skit, and students "tried out" for parts. Teachers worked at individual skit rehearsals, helping with movement, feeling, and voice projection.

The production also became a workshop for the students to apply learned values of sharing, cooperation, and decision making. The success of these student plays was one indication to us that these students will be able to participate in the community they choose in a more creative and compassionate manner.

The design and the goals of our course are predicated on the unique needs of our students. Rather than aspire to the subject matter goals set in most courses, we attempt to actively affect the attitudes, beliefs, desires, and goals of our students. In fact we attempt to affect the very core of the individual, his behavioral patterns and self-image.

Finding and defining the specific needs of the students was more difficult than deciding what was to be taught. Our humanities class is first of all composed of pupils who vary greatly in ability. Most of the very bright students have been channeled into the college course by their junior or senior year, the less able to what is called business. A majority, but not all, of the humanities students are in the less able category. There are, however, several bright students who, for one reason or another, choose to reject the college-course choice. The problem: how we reach slower students without boring the brighter ones.

What we tried to achieve could be diagramed by drawing ever-larger concentric circles. At the center is the core curriculum -- the actual learning material which is relatively simple, practical, and totally relevant. The brighter students assume teaching and leader roles, often setting the goals for what will be learned and helping the slower students to master the material. The teachers are consequently removed from the teacher-centered-classroom role to act as resource people. They move from group to group lending direction, adding far more sophisticated ideas to those individuals who can handle them, and therefore adjusting what they teach to each student's ability level.

For the student whose distaste for school has grown unheeded through the grades, the course can be and usually is his first experience with pleasurable learning. For one thing, it is flexible -- with four teachers present, discussion can swing in almost any direction without being curbed by any one teacher's lack of knowledge. The variety in teacher

technique and personality eliminates the routine of seeing the same face and the same basic approach each day. And besides, the student himself is faced with a responsibility which forces him to participate actively. Rather than the "I'll teach it and you learn it" attitude, the underlying tone of the course bases success not on the teacher but on the students themselves. The logical outcome is that the students not only sense responsibility for what is learned, but feel a personal success when all goes well.

What we try to do is create a course which rouses even the most dormant of interests and makes it so relevant that it will reassign value to school and learning. The teachers help students with the reading and communication skills that make them deficient. The homework is seldom heavy or so difficult that it might deter even the least able student, and the hours of class are all-important. Here, we work toward conceptual understanding rather than information learning; we expose the student to all kinds of artistic and musical as well as literary and social experiences.

We constantly stress effort and participation and reward generously for any demonstration of interest and sincere effort. The grouping, the helping of classmates, the responsibility for shared ideas, the constant opportunity for leadership, regardless of whether it is in research or woodworking, and the continued emphasis of learning's application to each student personally -- these all contribute to make the class and the course positive and rewarding.

Yet the course has academic respectability. Each of the teachers who designed and taught the course feels a personal responsibility for its content and substance. The major differences between the learning in the humanities course and the regular classroom are twofold. On the one hand, each teacher now realizes that at times his subject area must be subordinate to the group goal of an integrated study. For instance, the social studies teacher has often had to eliminate sections from his notes that he likes to teach, but finds irrelevant to the integrated direction of the course. The English teacher cannot stress the artistic or the structural value of a particular novel as much as she would in the traditional English class, finding that in the time she has she must stress the ideas of the book and relate them to the unit at hand.

The second difference is a necessity. Agreeing that the course must have content was simple enough. But how to cope with content without forcing particularly heavy home assignments on students who would not or could not be expected to complete them? In-class time becomes invaluable, and the teacher finds on his shoulders the burden of bringing to the students in a simple, clear, and relevant way the material he wants them to learn.

In spite of these differences, academic respectability still pervades the atmosphere of the class. The students are keenly aware that the course is no simplified version of what the college-preparatory student is taking.

They are relieved that they are considered too important for busy work and class sessions that resemble a study hall rather than an academic course. And perhaps the most effective factor is that the students begin, slowly at first and then with excitement, to realize that their ideas and insights, their attitudes and beliefs are respected by their teachers and sought in discussion and group work. In essence they realize that here, contrary to most of their public school education, they are important, they are somebody, and that we want to hear what they have to add. This active-involvement goal has such positive effects on the students that by the end of the year everyone has something to say, to add, to debate, and enthusiastically at that!

Yet this paper would be deceptive if we were not to relate the several problems we encountered as the school year began. Despite all the planning, the initial student reaction to the course was real fear and distrust. After some analysis we decided that the students were not atypical -- we had the typical acceptors, collaborators, vegetators, agitators, and rejectors. We had to admit that the problem lay with the humanities concept itself. First, the specialized course with a double period which counted for ten credits seemed to the students to be another attempt by the school authorities to give a remedial course to the less academically talented, another stigma for them to accept. Second, these students found it uncomfortable to have three to four teachers in the room at one time, this stemming from the view that the extra teachers were there for disciplinary purposes or for no purpose at all. Third, the majority of the students had absolutely no background in music or art, and the thought of coping with them was akin to medieval tortures. Fourth, many students felt uncomfortable in such a large class, and the necessity of participating with students of higher academic ability inhibited several of them. If these factors had not restricted communication and the sharing of ideas, then the cliques in the class would have. Within such a large class, the battle lines were fully drawn, and old antagonisms were obvious from the first day. Finally, our system of education had not prepared the students for this non-directive humanities course, as they were used to "Don't move and don't talk for the next six hours!" Seldom had they been asked by teachers to offer their opinions or to participate in a myriad of activities. The students were frightened by the apparent lack of structure; they were used to and felt safe only with textbooks and separate subject disciplines. Evidence of this student fear and distrust was frighteningly obvious from the first day. Students simply refused to answer questions and spent their time out of class by going to the guidance department to be rescheduled. When guidance would not grant this change, then absenteeism soared. Students did not do their reading assignments, showed the usual signs of restlessness in the classroom, or took out their frustrations on the music and art teachers. There was absolutely no pride in the class, and the students had very little pride in themselves.

After this stunningly inauspicious beginning, the participating teachers counterattacked. They held weekly meetings and planned to be fully prepared with practical exercises in each lesson, even if this

meant only mimeographed sheets for note-taking. Most importantly, at these weekly meetings the teachers fully integrated the four disciplines sometimes at the cost of mutilating the prepared syllabus. The results of these meetings helped give the students the structure they were afraid to lose.

The teachers also decided to make the music and art disciplines more attractive to the students. The students spent most of their time taking photographic field trips, making art items like masks, doing brush painting, building model cities, or fashioning collages. Music was a more difficult problem since we hoped to broaden their tastes in this field. We hit upon the method of introducing opera, getting the students involved in the excitement of riddles and romance in Puccini's Turandot, for example, or asking questions about values as reflected in Puccini's Madame Butterfly.

Perhaps the most effective weapon was the group work. Though teachers varied the type of group work, the general purpose was the same -- to break up the cliques and have students working with different people to encourage a flow of ideas within the small groupings, and to introduce the democratic principles of cooperation (individual effort within a group).

The most essential instrument in the eventual success of the class was a certain teacher-student atmosphere and rapport. Instead of the familiar custodial approach with its constant rewards and punishments and its definitive lines between teacher and student, the teachers succeeded in creating a relationship based on trust and the view that both students and teachers are very human and capable of mistakes. During many classes teachers debated teachers, and students happily joined the dialogue. We cannot emphasize enough this rapport -- students and teachers treating each other with respect, the teachers becoming accomplices in learning. Here, we think, is the key to the success of our particular humanities course. The course and its content are flexible and lack the humdrum routine of other curricula, but it is the personal sense of self-respect which we try to develop in the students that in the end makes it so rewarding. When treated like adults and with respect, the students respond as adults, aware of being respected: the self-fulfilling prophecy. Similarly, all the teachers involved are sincerely in love with teaching, and so the tone which underlies each class is always positive and confident -- never fearful or defensive. Again the students respond by seeking to become what they think we think they are -- important and interesting people whom we like working with. Perhaps it would be fallacious to believe that self-respect founded on others' respect for us is anything more than superficial. Yet too many times in one year alone have we seen this happen. We have watched students reputed to be failures, misfits, and trouble-makers who began the year in a slouch, slowly but markedly begin to stand very straight and tall and sit straining forward. These physical

manifestations, coupled with a new voice in the discussions, with sincere questions, with hearty laughter rather than self-conscious giggles, with plain old attentiveness, seem only to prove that self-respect can be fostered and aided by others, and that self-esteem in many of these students has been smothered too long.

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NHF WORKING PAPERS

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John Cawelti wrote this report as a follow-up to his two visits to Baltimore City College. Don F. Rogerson and his humanities team were developing an eleventh- and twelfth-grade elective sequence encompassing the English and social studies credits as well as other aspects of the humanities. In June 1971, the date of this report, BCC was an all-male, predominantly black, inner-city school. Professor Cawelti's suggestions would, however, be just as useful in other situations.

Professor Cawelti is Chairman, Committee on General Studies in the Humanities, The University of Chicago, and his special field is popular culture.

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THE AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES, AND THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION

In the report submitted after my first visit to BCC (NHF Working Paper C-102), I commented generally on the school's program, on the teachers, and on some of the problems of organization and administration they had encountered. In these areas, my second visit confirmed the impression I had strongly gained from my first week with the BCC humanities team: this is an exceptionally able and well-balanced group of teachers who have been working with great imagination and energy within the limits of the resources and time available to them to create an effective humanities program for inner-city students.

My own activities were concentrated during this second visit on getting a better impression of the eleventh-grade program, on talking with the eleventh-grade students in small groups, and in explaining to the faculty my specific suggestions for changes in the method and content of their courses. During my visit it was most interesting to have Walter Dale from the NHF present to videotape some of the sessions. We were in the process of an interesting experiment in educational feedback when the videotape machine unfortunately broke down. What we were hoping to do was to show the class as a whole the videotape of the critique session I had held with a small group from the class on the preceding day, and then to show them that portion of the tape of that afternoon's faculty work session which dealt with the faculty's response to their criticisms. It was then my intention to elicit the class' further comments on both these tapes as a means of bringing both students and faculty to a more mutual understanding of their various roles in a humanities course. I had never really had the chance to work with videotape before, but my brief experience, together with a most illuminating discussion of the pedagogical uses of videotape with Mr. Dale, excited me greatly. I would be most interested in further experiments with videotape as a part of the discussion process in secondary education.

In dealing with the specific content of the BCC humanities courses, I found myself constantly returning to two basic assumptions about humanities courses which I stated in my earlier report in the following fashion: 1) the student's own self-awareness should be placed at the center of the course; he should be encouraged by a sequence of themes or problems which begin with matters of direct and immediate concern to him to arrive at a greater definition and articulation of his own philosophy and life style, and from there to some awareness of alternative world views or cultural possibilities. 2) At the same time, the student should be trained in those skills of analysis and expression which he needs to better understand and communicate his own self-awareness to others and to understand more fully what their ideas and feelings can mean to him. It was largely on the basis of these two propositions about the purpose of the humanities that I made the following specific suggestions to the Baltimore team.

A. The Eleventh-Grade Course

There was general agreement among both students and faculty that the eleventh-grade course, taught this year for the first time, needed substantial revision to become as successful as the twelfth-grade course. Student criticism was very articulately stated in our session. The faculty were aware both of greater student apathy and even resistance toward this course and of greater confusion about purpose and the relation of the different disciplines to each other than in the twelfth grade. While some differences between the two courses doubtless resulted from differences in the group of students and teachers, I came to the conclusion that one major reason for the course's difficulties lay in a failure to build from the student's own awareness of himself as suggested in proposition 1) above. The course, entitled "Who Are We?" and focussing on American history and culture, had failed to engage itself fully with what the student perceived and understood as important to him about the subject. Therefore, I tried to conceive of a way in which both organization and classroom method could be revised to involve the student more fully in the ongoing process of the course. I suggested the following model as one way in which the same basic subject matter of American history and culture might be explored in relation to the student's own consciousness.

1. The course will revolve around a year-long guided individual exploration by each student of who he is. This exploration will use a variety of methods and disciplines and involve a number of basic intellectual skills, carefully arranged in a sequence of tasks of increasing complexity and sophistication, all focused around various ways of defining and accumulating material which will help each student to understand who he is. The development of this project should bear some relationship to the overall organization of the course. As far as classroom procedure is concerned, the project should be guided through small discussion groups which meet regularly to talk over the problems and methods of exploration and to present results to each other. I would suggest that one period a week be devoted to these "seminars", but that may be too much. As I recall, the possible sequence of stages through which the exploration might go went something like this.

    a. Open discussion in the seminar groups of how one discovers who one is. This might well grow out of the first unit in the course, which, as will be seen below, is entitled "People" and starts with the teachers trying to explain who they are. This discussion should be as wide-ranging as possible. One student might be appointed chairman and another secretary and the notes taken might later be duplicated and handed out to the group as a whole to give the different seminar groups a chance to exchange ideas.

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b. Beginning of a scrapbook in which the student collects materials on the things or activities that interest him (the self as a collection of interests): the scrapbook should grow throughout the year.

c. Creative projects (poems, stories, drawings, collages) which express the individual. Some students will do this enthusiastically. Others will have great trouble. Every effort should be made to help the student find a medium in which he can express himself most easily, and the point should be made that since people are different, not all can express themselves equally well in all media. Upon completion the various projects should be discussed by the group and related to the other parts of the exploration. For example, the group should ask themselves how the student's definition of himself in a poem relates to the collection of interests he has in his scrapbook.

d. Collection of basic biographical data. Each student should discover all the basic facts he can about his life: where he was born, the background of his family, etc. This should introduce the student to basic research skills. In addition to interviewing their families for the materials, students should be introduced to public records. This might be a good occasion for a field trip, motivated by the need to discover what facts about the student and his family can be found in public records. (Note: these basic factual materials, along with the other projects, should be accumulated in a research file so that toward the end of the year they can be organized into a final presentation.)

e. What do others think I am? Here the student should be sent out to interview family, friends, etc., asking for their conceptions of who he is. If this unit is set up properly, it should make a nice transition to the consideration of the self in cultural terms as a collection of social roles and traditions. This then becomes the next stage of the project.

f. How am I shaped by my neighborhood and city? At this stage, the student should be trying to see how he fits into the basic cultural patterns of his subculture and of the city of Baltimore. Since this is a complicated problem and an area in which there will probably be a good deal of similarity among students, it might be good to set up this exploration with teams of two or three students. The problem should be a combination of field research and an introduction to library work. Again, students should be encouraged to use a variety of media in their field work -- photographs, tapes, drawings, graphs, etc., as well as written statements.

g. How am I shaped by the past? In this stage of the exploration, the student turns to the past in an attempt to discover where he is. For most BCC students, this means black history, and the main source will be the library, though again every attempt should be made to use other resources: family, any local specialists in black history. Also, though black history will doubtless be the focus, the student should be encouraged to explore American history and traditions generally as they are related to the student's self-definition.

h. What am I as a human being? Though this problem is more appropriate to the twelfth-grade course, it would not hurt to introduce it at this point. The point here is to get the student to reflect on the basic psychological and biological makeup of man, either by considering such readings as Ardrey's African Genesis and Morris' Naked Ape, or by bringing in guest speakers.

i. What is my philosophy of life? At this stage the student is invited to rethink what he is as an individual person who can at least partially transcend the forces which have shaped him.

j. The final presentation of the project. In this final stage the student is helped by the seminar group and by the teacher to select and order the materials he has collected into some final form. The group should discuss the possible kinds of format, i.e., the final project could be ordered according to a series of central ideas; or it could be put together as a historical and biographical account; or it could be ordered imaginatively in terms of some principle of artistic form. This discussion should be given a good deal of time, for not only will it help the students to complete their year's individual exploration in a satisfying fashion, but it should articulate for them some of the major intellectual skills they have been learning in their investigation -- the ordering of ideas, the understanding of historical causes, and the modes of creative expression.

2. The course itself by investigating "Who Are We?" should go along with the student's individual exploration as outlined above. I suggest the following model which is essentially based on the idea of moving from present and immediate into the past rather than the other way around, as is the common practice with courses in which history plays a main role.

a. People. The course opens with an examination of the lives of some present-day Americans, beginning with teachers and students. Life-patterns, attitudes, problems are explored.

I would begin by having a couple of the teachers give a presentation of their lives and then allow the students to ask questions. Then I would try to get a sample of students to do the same and finally bring in a variety of guests. After a series of such presentations, the students should be encouraged to discuss what similarities and differences of patterns they have discovered in the various individuals whose lives they have explored.

b. Things. A discussion of some of the central objects of our present lives. One might use the time-capsule problem here to get the students to select a group of representative objects which would seem to be most revealing about our culture. Then various modes of interpreting and understanding these objects would be explored. Again one should look for patterns, and try to understand the relationship between the objects discussed and the people's lives which have been explored in the earlier unit.

c. People in the past. In this unit students would read various autobiographical and fictional selections (e.g., selections from the autobiographies of Benjamin Franklin, Andrew Carnegie, Henry Adams, etc.), works of fiction suggestive of life patterns (e.g., selections from Howells, The Rise of Silas Lapham; Cahan, The Rise of David Levinsky; Johnson, The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man; Momaday, The Way to Rainy Mountain). These autobiographical materials would be discussed in relation to the present-day people discussed earlier and similarities and differences of pattern would be discerned.

d. Things in the past. This would parallel unit b as unit c parallels unit a. Artifacts, paintings, buildings, etc. from the past would be chosen and compared with the things discussed from the present.

e. Life styles and cultural patterns. By this time the student should be somewhat aware that the people and things he has been discussing are not merely isolated and unique individuals, but parts of larger patterns which constitute culture. In this unit, the student should be encouraged to put this material together and develop some idea of "Who We Are" as a number of life styles and subcultures. It would be desirable here to begin with the students' own life patterns, and then to bring speakers and materials to illustrate other subcultural patterns. A field trip to various city neighborhoods and areas would be useful here, if it can be arranged, so that students can get some sense of how buildings and the design of areas reflect and shape cultural patterns. Note that this unit more or less corresponds with stages e and f of the student's "seminar" project.

f. Cultural traditions in America. Here the student has a chance to look back into history to see how the patterns of the present have developed. This unit should be opened with more or less explicit discussion of the uses of history. What do we need to know in order to better understand and shape the present? While knowledge of the past has some fascination and value in itself irrespective of the light it may shed on present problems, it is also important to know how to use the past to better understand the present. How can we do this? How can we avoid reading our present biases into the past? Can we avoid this altogether? These are problems which should be seriously discussed at the outset. This unit will be particularly hard to structure, because it should grow at least partly out of the students' discussions; yet, obviously, materials must be prepared ahead of time. Here, I would suggest that we try to second guess the students a little and pick out some cultural themes that they are likely to be concerned about and build materials around these. Some suggestions: race, religion, politics, the rise of cities and industry, central ideals like success, individualism, democracy. Another way of doing this would be to investigate the development of major American groups and their traditions. Note that this unit corresponds with stages g and h of the seminar projects.

g. Individual expression and its cultural background. Here a few major works of literature, art, architecture, and music, possibly of philosophy, are carefully examined both as expressions of an individual and as reflections of the American cultural tradition. In this unit the student should come to grips with the relation between culture and the individual which he should also be encountering in stage i of the individual project. This unit should serve as a summary of the year's work and also raise some of the considerations that will be primary in the twelfth-grade course.

B. The Twelfth-Grade Course

The twelfth-grade course seemed generally quite good to me, and the faculty had a number of interesting ideas for minor revisions in the program, so that I made only three suggestions about specific revisions for that course.

1. Instead of a series of individual papers and projects, it seemed desirable to me to have a year-long independent research project as in the eleventh grade, again developed by a series of stages, and making use of the "seminar" method for guidance and mutual help. I suggested that the student be invited to

select at the beginning of the year some particular thing which interested him and about which he was curious enough to make a serious and sustained investigation. The appropriate stages would be definition of the object of study, preliminary statement of its significance, careful analysis, exploration of various modes of interpretation, investigation of cultural and historical background, comparison with other aspects of culture, and finally, cross-cultural comparison. The project would begin with a particular object of study and then see how this object related to more and more complex views of its cultural context. Thus, the student should also find that the sequence of themes treated in the twelfth-grade course should give him new perspectives from which to examine his particular object of interest. At the end of the year, as in the eleventh grade, he would be helped to pull his material together into a single sustained treatment of his subject. For example, suppose the student selected the Baltimore Orioles as his object of interest. He would presumably begin with an attempt to describe and analyze the game of baseball and with an investigation of the specific history of the Baltimore team. He would then consider various ways in which the game of baseball might be interpreted and understood: as a sport, as the result of actions and decisions by a group of individuals, as a cultural ritual, as public entertainment, etc. Then he would try to understand more fully how baseball relates to American traditions of value, to urban life, to the history of race relations, etc. Finally, he would compare baseball with other sports both in our culture and in other cultures and periods. As in the case of the eleventh-grade project, every kind of investigation would be encouraged: keeping a scrapbook, interviews with knowledgeable people, photographs, library work, etc.

2. I would encourage a little more explicit attention to the nature of various kinds of inference and reasoning, i.e., the major intellectual disciplines of philosophy, history, rhetoric, and poetics. This can be accomplished, I think, in two ways: a) by making the process of reasoning a part of the discussion; and b) by sustained and detailed analysis of works which are both models of various kinds of reasoning and accessible to the students. a) means that when a topic like authority is discussed, the discussion should include some consideration of the kind of data necessary to discuss certain kinds of problems and the sort of reasoning that can be made from that data. Students should learn in other words to differentiate between a historical problem that can be investigated by inference from specific events and a philosophical problem which must be based on certain assumptions or axioms. They should become able to see when someone is making a rhetorical appeal or constructing a historical or philosophical argument. It did seem to me that much of what I observed in the twelfth grade did involve an understanding of how one reasons, but I also felt, and so did the students, that questions were sometimes not fully explored. It is probably

better to discuss fewer topics thoroughly so that the student can experience what it is to really work through a problem in some complexity.

Under b) the problem of text selection is a difficult one. How does one find texts that exemplify the most profound kind of philosophical and historical reasoning which are still accessible to high school seniors? For philosophy, Plato is a natural here, and since his dialogues deal with many of the themes around which the twelfth-grade course centers they would be an excellent choice. For example, there is no more profound treatment of the problem of authority than in the first four books of the Republic. For history, if one wanted to stay with the classics (a possibility envisioned under suggestion 3 below) selections from Thucydides' history of the Peloponnesian War would be most useful. The first book has a most interesting discussion of the problems of historical investigation, while books II and III have some of the finest examples of rhetoric one can find anywhere. Finally, Thucydides' account of the Syracusan expedition with its many suggestive parallels to contemporary history would be well worth considering. Another, shorter, historical text that would be a good source of discussion would be Turner's essay on the significance of the frontier.

3. My third suggestion grows from the idea that one important function of a humanities course is to make students aware of the extent to which they are shaped by cultural forces and also to give them some capacity for cultural transcendence by making them aware of cultural alternatives. Thus, I suggest that some systematic attempt be made to see how another culture or cultures treat the themes around which the twelfth-grade course is organized. This could be done in one of two ways: either a unit by itself dedicated to exploring some central features of another culture in comparison to our own, or by planting appropriate readings from another culture in each of the other units. My suggestions for a cultural alternative were Classical Greece, for which a great richness of texts would be available, Samoa as treated in Margaret Mead's Coming of Age in Samoa, or one of the American Indian cultures as treated in e.g. Gene Weltfish's The Lost Universe.

In closing my report, I would like to express my gratitude to Don Rogerson and the BCC humanities group for being such exciting people to work with. I can perhaps best sum up the excellence of the Baltimore teachers by saying that I wish I had been able to take their courses. Before visiting Baltimore I read a comment by another member of the NHF faculty who said that he felt he had learned much more in his visit than he had been able to teach. That was certainly my experience.

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NHF WORKING PAPERS

E-114

How to develop a humanities program for grade nine that will emphasize community studies and so motivate and interest students who tend to reject formal subject matter, traditionally organized? Roland B. Kimball, Professor of Education, University of New Hampshire, proposed an approach for Bristol Eastern High School that could be tried in communities other than Bristol, Connecticut. The coordinator at the high school was Mr. John Whitcomb.

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This course is for students who seek a program emphasizing their relationship to their community, which is Bristol, Connecticut. It rests on the premise that the "community-oriented" students are especially interested in studies that are clearly relevant to their immediate needs, interests, and concerns. Formal subject matter, traditionally organized, usually will not motivate these students. Hence, this course is designed to encourage the students and the teachers to identify "centers of interest," "areas of inquiry," and to develop learning activities which focus on these.

Although a traditional subject approach is set aside, the traditional subjects are not. However, the formal subject matter, both content and skills, will be taught as needed in the development of the central themes. This integration of the usual subjects into a multidisciplinary approach to several central themes means that they will be supportive but not central aspects of the course. To the extent that conventional subject matter is needed by the student to solve the significant problems posed by the Community Studies course, the subject matter will be taught.

This position underscores the central intent of the Community Studies course. The course will emphasize techniques for studying the larger community, the place of the individual within it, and the ways that each can and does influence the other.

In many ways a person's contact with his community follows no logical and orderly progression. It is determined by personal interests, the flow of events, the circumstances of one's life. To some extent, this must also be a characteristic of the Community Studies course. Not always can it be determined in advance what will be stimulating, important, and appropriate for the students. Yet some general plan, some point of departure, is necessary. The following course outline is suggested as a preliminary view of what the course might contain. The events of the moment quite probably will change some of its features. But we can presume that the central issues identified in the outline, and the learning processes these imply, will characterize the program, variations in specifics notwithstanding.

The following pages give only a very broad outline, with the development of a few specific possibilities as illustrations of what can be done. If this approach looks useful, a team of teachers probably can fill in more details in a working period of a couple of weeks.

I. Bristol as a political, economic, social structure

The course probably should open with emphasis on the "here and now." Students would be encouraged to reflect on their own impressions of Bristol.

A variety of activities can be used:

1. Draw "personal maps" of Bristol which depict the areas or objects of greatest interest, or least interest; of greatest value, or least value; of greatest beauty or least beauty; etc. Comparisons and discussions will help students understand their own view of things as well as differing ones held by classmates.

2. Keep a journal for one week, recording the places in Bristol where you spend your time, the things you do, the people you deal with, the reasons for doing these various things. Do any patterns seem evident? Compare the patterns. What does this tell us about Bristol? About ourselves?

3. Using video tape recorder, still cameras, tape recorders, and similar devices, prepare a documentary on some interesting topic--"What Bristol Does and Does Not Do for Sixteen-Year-Olds" or "Work and Play in Bristol" or "Success and Failure in Bristol."

4. What seems to be the most important decision affecting Bristol that you can recall? What was it? What makes it important? Was it good or bad? Who made it? If we wanted to have that decision changed, could we get it changed? How?

5. Make a survey of the out-of-school jobs held by students at Bristol Eastern High School. What are they? What does it tell us about the current economy of Bristol?

6. If I want more information about Bristol, how can I find it? (newspaper, chamber of commerce handouts, city reports, word of mouth, etc.) Select a topic to investigate, using sources of this type. For example, "Youth Programs in Bristol" or "Job Opportunities in Bristol." Present your findings to the class.

Note: These are only a few ideas. Numerous other possibilities need to be developed by the team of teachers handling this course.

II. Bristol as dynamic flow from past to future

Building on the "here and now," students should be brought to see the community as a living thing, influenced by its past and by its hopes for the future. Activities might include:

1. Try to recollect your earliest impressions of Bristol. What stands out in your memory? How much has changed? Were the changes real ones, or simply a result of your own growing maturity? If the changes are real, what were they? Why do you think they occurred? Could or should the changes have been prevented? How? Why?

2. Develop an "oral history" of Bristol by tape recording interviews with senior citizens who can tell you how it was in "the old days."

3. Locate old photographs, postcards, reports, papers, etc. to develop an understanding of how Bristol met some major crisis--flood, fire, depression, war, social conflict. What was done to meet the crisis? Who did it? Was it done wisely and effectively? Could it happen today?

4. Prepare some charts, tabulations, graphs which depict changes in population, income, taxable property, community expenditures, work force, etc. in Bristol in the past fifty or one hundred years. Indicate projected trends for the future. Do these data suggest that Bristol will be an attractive city for you twenty-five years from now? Why?

5. Visit the city planning office. What plans are there to control and stimulate the growth of Bristol? Find out about zoning restrictions. Who makes such plans and rules? How can the average citizen influence this process? What aspects of the plans for Bristol-of-the-future do you find most hopeful? Most depressing? Why? Compare your opinion with that of your classmates, your parents.

Note: Additional activities will be needed. The preceding suggestions merely sample the possibilities.

III. Bristol as part of a larger pattern

This section of the course would seek to expand the student's view of his community. Seeing Bristol within a state-regional-national context is the purpose. Learning activities might ask to student to:

1. Examine the activities of the state and federal government which affect the quality of life in Bristol. These might include state and federal highway programs, defense contracts, education, the draft, military installations, pollution control regulations, welfare programs, and the like. Which of these make Bristol a better place to live? Which make it less attractive? Is the amount of state and federal control increasing or decreasing? Is this good?

2. Historically, what part have the city of Bristol and its citizens played in the development of the state and the nation? Has the influence of the city been increasing in recent years or decreasing? What accounts for this? Is this a desirable situation?

3. Keep a journal for one week detailing everything you and your family purchase. Analyze these purchases to see what they tell you. For example, how many items were produced in Bristol?

How many come from the general region? How many from a completely different section of the U.S.? From another country? What does this tell you about the extent to which Bristol depends upon other communities? You can perform a similar analysis regarding other facets of your life--for example, analyze the sources of our information regarding current events or analyze the sources of our entertainment and our cultural stumulation.

Note: This section of the course may present the greatest technical difficulties as well as the greatest opportunity. Through books, films, video-taped TV programs, speakers, field trips, and other activities, the student can be helped to gain some insight into the interdependencies of our contemporary, urban, technological society. This is a topic as vast as civilization itself. Students with lower academic motivation probably will need much assistance to see the relevance of the larger picture, both present and past. Yet this picture ultimately bears so heavily on the quality of life in Bristol (or anywhere) that efforts must be made to bring the student in touch with it. Simulations, role playing, debates, and similar activities may be helpful.

IV. Bristol as an arena for value decisions

Contemporary life in the United States surely provides for a wide variety of ethical, aesthetic, and moral choices. Students should become aware of these choices and, to the extent possible, participate in the choice-making. Beyond this, each student very well might imagine his own version of Utopia--realistic and attainable or fantasized and beyond the possible. Quite clearly, the issues considered in this phase of the course are sensitive ones. Indoctrination is undesirable. But responsible value choices, consistently and independently made, seem to be an important objective.

1. What are the things adults do that most irritate you? What are the things you do that most irritate adults? After considering the answers to these questions, can you work out a sort of "behavior code" which would be most satisfying to you? Would this code put you in conflict with other people? Who? Why? How can the probable conflict be handled? Is Bristol making any progress in this area?

2. What do you find to be the most appealing and attractive object or area in Bristol? What makes it so? Will it hold its appeal twenty-five years from now? Why? Try to capture the essence of its attractiveness through a picture, poem, essay, song, or some other mode of expressing what you feel.

3. If Bristol could be rebuilt from the ground up, and you could design this ideal city, what would it look like? What pattern of government would it have? What would be the general style

of life for its citizens? What would be expected of them? How much of your "ideal" city could be attained in Bristol within the next ten years? Explain.

Note: Unless the teachers accept the responsibility for rather wide reading in the area of values, ethics, and moral development, this aspect of the course may lack depth. Further, other readings that focus on our contemporary dilemma (The Making of a Counter-Culture, Roszack; The Revolution of Hope, Fromm; Future Shock, Tofiler; Technological Man, Ferkiss; The Limits to Growth, Meadows et al.; The Doomsday Syndrome, Maddox; Walden II, Skinner; etc.) will help the teacher grasp the scope of the dilemma and thus be able to plan learning activities which clarify it for the student.

V. Bristol as a geophysical entity

Just where this unit should appear in the course is a puzzle to me. Without question, cities are somewhat shaped by the climate and the physical geography of their locale. It would be logical to start with this aspect of the matter. But it might not be the best teaching strategy. If students are most interested in the conditions of their own existence, the geophysical influences probably will seem remote and unimportant at the start. Later in the course the influence of these nonhuman dimensions may become more evident. If so, that would be the time to introduce learning activities which explore the geography, geology, and climatology of the region, and the extent to which these have influenced the growth and character of Bristol.

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NHF WORKING PAPERS

E-111

How to catalyze and focus the collective insights and experience of a team of humanities teachers? Professor John Anthony Scott wrote this report about his visit to Sylvania (Ohio) High School South, and although its intent was to detail a specific program for a single school, its suggestions have a much broader application, especially for courses centered on American Studies. Mr. Scott calls it "a kind of footnote" to his Teaching for a Change (Bantam paperback, 1972).

Mr. Scott is Professor of Law, Rutgers University, and also teaches at Fieldston School in the Bronx, New York. The coordinator at Sylvania is Mrs. Georgia Baird.

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I. We started with a discussion of the theme of the American Studies or Humanities course, but we did not spend too much time on this. An overall theme, perhaps, is something that we discover and build as we teach, react to our students, and explore the world with them. For the rest our general thrust seems clear enough: to explore the truth about the world and ourselves in terms of the major problems that face this generation--race relations, war and peace, the environment, human freedom, and love. The approach is human because otherwise it can have no interest for youth; and it is historical because the meaning of the world and its future are rooted in the past. We understand what we and the world are by tracing the course of our development.

II. We embarked upon an examination, substantively, of the best books to start with, and the way of approaching them. A number of guidelines for selection were suggested:

-- Books chosen ought to be, for the most part, of reasonable length; people in the drive of today's world simply do not have time for long books, and there is no reason why they should be asked to read a lengthy work if a short one is available that will do the job as well.

-- Books should be assigned with economy, taking care not to overburden the student with a mass of material that he has no time to digest, that leaves only a hasty and blurred impression. Rather a few first-class works over the course of a year, dealt with in detail, than a large number that can only be tackled skimpily.

-- Books chosen should be, if possible, literary masterpieces that focus with intensity upon a situation that is both human and historical.

III. Novels, it was pointed out, are to be analyzed upon at least two levels--personal and historical. Students will not undertake this kind of analysis unless they are shown how to do it, are in fact trained to do it. But a rounded, many-sided approach to literary analysis cannot be successfully undertaken unless the teachers have taught themselves how to do this. Here it is imperative that the teachers teach each other--that the historians explain the historical aspects of the book to the humanities people, and that the literary folk explain theme and plot to the historians. It is a matter of the teachers' transforming themselves and their own approach before they can successfully teach the students. For this purpose a team seminar would be appropriate, to meet regularly during the school year for study and discussion of the books that are to be assigned. Equally essential are summer workshops and sabbatical leaves to enable the teachers constantly to improve their mastery of the subject, to examine new materials, and to work out new approaches.

IV. The following highly selective topics were suggested for the year's course:

A. Slavery and the Civil War

One of the functions of history is to demythologize the past; that is, to help the students tear away the veil of lies or semitruths that stand between them and the real world. Nowhere is the process of demythologizing more important than in the area of race relations. We discussed the idea of developing in this area, around slavery, a confrontation of documents and of ideas.

1) Have the students start with the familiar, e.g., Gone with the Wind. Though it is true the book is long, there is not much of a problem here; most students will either have read the book already or will have seen the movie. Gone with the Wind, by the way, shares with Common Sense and Uncle Tom's Cabin the distinction of being a paperback best-seller the demand for which does not diminish with the years. It will not be too difficult to have the students construct, both verbally and in writing, the thesis or stereotype which Margaret Mitchell puts forward--magnolia civilization in which aristocratic Southerners lived in graceful intimacy with childlike Africans, overwhelmed by Yankee Huns; tragic struggle of Southern womanhood to continue family tradition in face of overwhelming odds, etc., etc.

2) Then have the student read Solomon Northup, Twelve Years a Slave (1854: reissued by Dover Publications, Inc., 1970, paperback). This is the story of a free black man who was kidnapped in 1841 and spent twelve years on Louisiana cotton and sugar plantations before--miraculously--being extradited in 1853.

All kinds of questions arise from the confrontation of 1) and 2). Which is true (is any portion of these two versions of slavery reconcilable)? If the student asks, "Can you believe Northup?" ask another question, "Can you believe Mitchell?" Is Northup's version of slavery corroborated by other writers, in particular by other slaves? If Mitchell is not telling the truth, why not? If her work is mythology, why has it been so popular?

These are, of course, preliminary questions. If the group decides to use this approach, teachers should read both books over the summer and consider the possibility of setting up a special meeting to discuss them before the actual teaching begins.

One additional argument for beginning the course not only with the slavery question but with a black author is that it introduces, from the start, a powerful black presence. The more lily-white our schools become, over the years, the more important it is for teachers to mount their own battle against segregation by making sure that, one way or another, the black presence is brought before the minds and hearts of white students.

As the Wingspread Report pointed out, "THE BLACK EXPERIENCE IS MORE THAN JUST AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF AMERICAN LIFE: IT IS IN FACT CENTRAL TO UNDERSTANDING AMERICAN HISTORY AT ALL" (Scott, Teaching for a Change, pp. 190-191).

The demolition of the slavery myth helps open up for students an area of human life and history that they have not thought about before. Perhaps this introduction has awakened their curiosity to know more. In this case, there is a lot of fine material available in paperback:

Frederick Douglass	Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself (New American Library paperback, 1968)
John F. Bayliss, ed.	Black Slave Narratives (Collier-Macmillan paperback, 1970)
Julius Lester	To Be a Slave (Dial Press, hardcover and paperback, 1968)
Kenneth Stampp	The Peculiar Institution (Vintage paperback, 1956)

And for the library:

Norman R. Yetman, ed.	Voices from Slavery: The Life of American Slaves in the Words of 100 Men and Women Who Lived in It and Many Years Later Talked about It (Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1970)
Frederick Law Olmsted	The Cotton Kingdom (1861; reissued Alfred Knopf, Inc., 1953)
Frances Ann Kemble	Journal of a Residence on a Georgia Plantation (Alfred Knopf, Inc., 1961)

In the context of this first assignment on slavery we also dealt with the importance of having a full discussion of the plot and themes of the book under consideration. This discussion is indispensable as a basis upon which to ground a more advanced exploitation of the material. These particular people dealt with in the book under consideration, their struggles, sufferings, and experience, become the specific illustration of a more general historical theme or epoch. (The contribution that can be made in this context by the narrative lecture that fills the student in on the general background of a given topic is dealt with below.)

Also discussed were ways that students might dramatize the topic by the use of art, music, and the imagination. Suggested possibilities:

A plantation model to scale, either two- or three-dimensional. For an example, see the map of the excavated and reconstructed Butler Island plantation in Kemble, Journal, cited above, p. 57.

Slave songs. See John A. Scott, Ballad of America (Bantam paperback, second printing, 1972, pp. 190-215).

Civil suit by Solomon Northup against captors and owners for damages, losses, wrongs, physical suffering, and mental anguish undergone in twelve years of slavery. This could be drawn up with the help of parents and/or faculty husbands who are attorneys.

B. The Gilded Age

Here three possible microcosms for the study of the Gilded Age were explored: The Frontier, Labor, and Captains of Industry.

The Frontier. Again, we can start with a stereotype that is deeply familiar to young people, present fresh material, and than ask: True or false? The stereotype is the cowboy: the wild free Westerner, living in a 100% male world, master of his own fate, etc. Place alongside this a small masterpiece of western literature, Andy Adams' Log of a Cowboy (Doubleday Dolphin paperback). It is the story of a young man who leaves his family and takes to the trail, helping to drive the Circle Dot herd from the Rio Grande to the Blackfoot Agency in Montana in 1882.

We prepare the students by locating the High Plains on the map and discussing the general characteristics of steppe, veldt, or pampas environment, using for this purpose Walter Prescott Webb's classic study The Great Plains (Grosset Universal paperback). As we shall see, laying this basis in the geography and ecology of the Plains is going to be invaluable when we come to our study of the New Deal and the Depression. Then with the students' help we trace the approximate path of the herd from the San Antonio region, across the Indian country, through Kansas, western Nebraska, along the north Platte into Montana. And, again, in taking the students to this area, we have continuity in terms of location with our previous topic of slavery. Solomon Northup had been a captive on the Red River in Louisiana, not so far from the Texas border.

From here we move into the deeper themes of Adams' life as a worker in the meat industry, as horseman, as human being. Again we pose the question: True or false? How far is the stereotype that we started with true in terms of the actual historical experience as recorded by the participant himself, the cowboy? The question is bound to produce a lively discussion. If the answer is that the stereotype is inadequate, or only partially true, this leads to a further question: Why do we get, or why are we satisfied with, an inadequate picture of reality?

This question provides a link with another aspect of the Gilded Age, the story of American labor. It is not too difficult to show that the

cowboy myth appealed to Americans who were not cowboys, who were being shut into factories and mines, and were undergoing the tragic experience of industrial bondage in the open-shop era. For these people the dream of freedom--physical freedom as well as freedom from oppression--was a deep consolation, the holding fast to a national dream during a difficult time.

Labor. The story of the worker and the immigrant is clearly a fundamental theme of the Gilded Age. There is a lot of good material available to study this, but there is no reason why we should not experiment with using a piece of short-story length. Ray Stannard Baker's "The Revolutionary Strike" comes immediately to mind. It is (to my mind) a brilliant short account of the great Lawrence, Massachusetts, textile strike of 1912. The meaning of the open shop, of an immigrant community, of labor struggles, of police brutality, of legal frame-up are made vivid and clear. And there are many fine works available in paperback for the student whose feelings and curiosity are aroused and who wants to explore further, notably:

Milton Meltzer	Bread and Roses: The Struggle of American Labor 1865-1915 (Vintage Sundial paperback, 1972)
Samuel Yellen	American Labor Struggles (S.A. Russell, 1956; not in paperback)

Baker's piece is available in Living Documents in American History, Volume 2, pages 538-560 (Washington Square Press paperback, 1969, ed. J.A. Scott).

Captains of Industry. There was discussion of the most appropriate source for the study of the tycoon. The suggestion here was to steer away from the more conventional sources like the Titans and to concentrate on Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby. This book, like Northup and Adams, is of the right length and, from a literary point of view, of the highest merit. It has the further advantage of being located strategically at a point in time (1920-24) when one era is ending and another is beginning. The book takes us deep into the Gilded Age and also raises the curtain on World War I and the twentieth century. In terms, therefore, of historical coverage, it illuminates both nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It gives us two for the price of one.

The Great Gatsby

We devoted a whole session to an analysis of this book, following a pattern that we had worked out earlier. The first thing we have to do, with any novel, is to master the plot and theme(s). This is the indispensable basis for any wider consideration of the historical implications of the work. Here the "literary side" of the team has to take the lead and help the whole team get a firm grip.

Once this is done, it is possible to move to different levels of analysis in which the historical or ideological aspects of the work, as

part of the American experience, are brought to the fore. Pedagogically, of course, this is great: if we cannot interest the students first of all in the human aspects of the document, we can forget about the rest.

We had what I found to be a very stimulating and interesting discussion of the main characters in the novel, their interrelationships and motivation. We also discussed the symbolism with which this book is so rich. Examination of symbolism does not give us any "right" or "wrong" but it provides an imaginative way to extend enormously the range and the depth with which we can probe the material, stimulate discussion of its meaning, and promote student familiarity with it.

Some of the questions raised in this "threshhold probe" were:

Is Daisy or Gatsby the central figure? In the discussion it was developed that the impact of wealth is different upon each of the two central characters. Daisy has it, it creates a buffer between her and reality, stifling life, struggle, and growth. Gatsby, on the other hand, does not have money, but wealth is in the center of his passionate and tempestuous dreams. The struggle for wealth, maybe, distorts his character, but it is this struggle that molds him and brings him into the mainstream of American life.

If Daisy truly loves Gatsby, why does she not leave Tom when Gatsby makes it and can provide her, in West Egg, what Tom has in East Egg? The answer given to this question seemed to flow naturally from the above analysis. Daisy is a weak person, bound by convention and the bonds of inherited as opposed to acquired wealth. When Tom goes off to war in 1918, he has, in reality, lost his chance forever. Daisy is torn on the day of her marriage; after that she is the total prisoner of her decision and her past. Nothing--not Tom's infidelity, not the reality of Gatsby's presence--can change matters.

What kind of character is Tom? Perhaps he is brilliantly drawn. His attitudes toward wife and mistress are quite different. The one is a symbol of conventional success, the mother of his heir(s), a possession, a thing on a marital pedestal. The other gratifies a different kind of taste, but is still a possession, a thing bought and paid for.

What really is Gatsby's dream? Love and material wealth are interestingly mixed up in the man's aspirations and behavior. To possess Daisy he must be as rich and successful as Tom; and he pursues the "get rich" dream with single-minded purpose. What this ends up in is not only a personal confrontation between Tom and Gatsby, but a socioeconomic confrontation between acquired wealth and inherited wealth, between west and east.

Coming to symbols, we discussed a number (the light outside Daisy's house, the place names West and East Egg, the yellow Rolls-Royce, etc.), but focused upon one in particular--the pool in Gatsby's garden. But a grasp of what is involved here projected us immediately to the wider levels of analysis suggested by the book, so we shall have to return to the pool later.

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What leverage does Gatsby offer for the exploitation of the significance of the Gilded Age and World War I taken as an historical era?

a) On one level the book helps us build an historical set. The Henry Ford Museum, the Toledo Museum, the Institute of Technology in Washington, D.C., all offer rich materials in terms of automobiles, clothing, and houses from which to build a picture of the look and feel of the early 1920's.

b) As tycoon was Gatsby exceptional? Or can we verify him as a social type from the experience of Toledo and from the history of Michigan and Ohio? (This, again, is our true-or-false query in a different guise.) As members of the seminar were quick to point out, the midwest in the Gilded Age was indeed West Egg--the happy hunting ground of tycoons, including, of course, the tycoon of tycoons, Henry Ford. Here is a wonderful way to get the students deep into the history of the Gilded Age through the medium of local history, of the exploitation of the rich resources on the doorstep--glass tycoons, oil tycoons, automobile tycoons. (Question: Would the shattering effect have been less if the locale of the novel had been laid in West and East Glass?)

c) The local exploitation of business history leads at once to a consideration of the philosophy of wealth put forward by a national spokesman, Andrew Carnegie. The Gospel of Wealth is available in various places in excerpts, or complete in Living Documents, Volume 2, cited above. Some students, at least, might want to explore the debate sparked by great accumulations of wealth and the problem of how to use, control, or dispose of them. And the question may be posed: Has the problem of affluence/poverty become greater or less since the days of the Gilded Age?

d) Precisely how did Gatsby get his money, 1920-24? He was a bootlegger. And again, as the seminar pointed out, this has special significance in terms of Toledo and the possibility of exploiting the righ local history of bootlegging and black market crime and moneymaking that exists in this area. Let the students check out the history of the 18th Amendment and the dry movement in the United States. What does the experience with prohibition indicate in terms of the modern black market in narcotics? How big were the midwest bootleg fortunes, 1920-24? Does this give us some indication of Gatsby's "reality," and his fortune?

e) The question was raised: What is the ultimate symbol of wealth in the Gilded Age? And suggested as a possible answer was the yacht. If so, the location of the Eggs on Long Island Sound at once leaps into significance--by the end of the nineteenth century it was becoming the playground of a new breed of wealthy seamen. This raises interesting questions. What has been the sea experience in American life? How do you account for the precipitous decline of the American merchant marine in the period following the Civil War? Why the evolution from the clipper as a supreme symbol of navigational mastery and commercial power to the yacht as symbol of idle affluence?

> "To young Gatz, resting on his oars and looking up at the railed deck, that yacht represented all the beauty and glamour in the world.... Cody asked him a few questions ... and found that he was quick and extravagantly ambitious. A few days later he took him to Duluth and bought him a blue coat, six pairs of white duck trousers, and a yachting cap. And when the Tuolomee left for the West Indies and the Barbary Coast Gatsby left too." (Scribner's paperback, 1953, pp. 100-101)

At the height of youth and ambition, Gatsby sails the salt sea, follows the oceanways of the old pirates and buccaneers. He ends up in a fresh-water pool, dressed in a bathing suit, supine upon a rubber mattress:

> "There was a faint, barely perceptible movement of the water as the fresh flow from one end of the pool urged its way toward the drain at the other. With little ripples that were hardly the shadows of waves, the laden mattress moved irregularly down the pool. A small gust of wind that scarcely corrugated the surface was enough to disturb its accidental course with its accidental burden." (pp. 162-163)

The oceans themselves, the garden pool, become symbols to probe the gigantic movement of American history. The ship moves from dominant symbol of technology to plaything; the sea captain vanishes, is replaced by the captain of industry, a captain who bears the trace and stamp of his historic past even at the very end of his life.

C. World War I and the Twenties

Perhaps The Great Gatsby will illuminate the World War I era as well as the Gilded Age--it is a characteristic of the greatest literary documents that they illuminate with brilliance a broad segment of the historical track, that they summarize the past and also foreshadow the future. Perhaps Gatsby could be supplemented here simply by a lecture. Perhaps some students will want to go further. If they do, the following is highly recommended:

Steven Jantzen — Hooray for Peace Hurrah for War: The United States during World War I (Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1971)

In any event, it is possible here to be entirely flexible. If there were time, it might be fun to experiment with Erich Maria Remarque's All Quiet on the Western Front (Fawcett paperback). This is a book which, strange to say, is perhaps even better in the English translation than in the original; and it can be backed up by the movie. Much can be done here, in the wider context, with the concept of war economy and "return to normalcy." The book, further, is remarkable evidence in debating the question: Is man naturally aggressive? Perhaps it is indispensable raw

material in a unit dealing with the concept of "war and peace." In terms of follow-up, I would like nothing better than to participate in a discussion of this whole question, taking off perhaps from Remarque and also (for an antithetical viewpoint) Konrad Lorenz's On Aggression (Bantam paperback, 1969).

D. Depression and New Deal

Winston M. Estes' Another Part of the House strikes me as an absolutely admirable selection to kick off and illuminate the period 1929-39--preferable, perhaps, to the Grapes of Wrath, if for no other reason than because it is shorter and therefore more manageable in the framework of a year's course. We devoted a whole session to a careful and, to me, fascinating discussion of this work and an analytical approach to it.

Another Part of the House

1) As with Gatsby, we first of all discussed the leading characters in the story, and their relationships with each other.

2) We then explored the question: What is the environment in which the story is enacted? We answered this in terms of a) the house in which the family lived, b) the town of Wordsworth, Texas, and c) the plains environment of the Texas panhandle. In the case of c), we are building on familiar ground, since we had explored the nature of the steppe in dealing with Andy Adams and the Circle Dot herd. As for a) and b), it may help here, as in the case of the antebellum plantation, to encourage the students to build a set in terms of an actual model of the house and/or a map of a small Texas town that locates the essential items: road, railroad, stores, houses, cotton press, jail, doctor's clinic, drug store, etc.

3) We are now ready to look at the book on a different level. Putting 1) and 2) together, what is it about? Clearly enough, the theme is a "nuclear" family, bound together by ties of love, a community of such families bound together by community solidarity, being overwhelmed by a blizzard. This blizzard has a twofold aspect: in the physical sense it is a duststorm; in the economic sense it is the Depression.

But if this is the theme of the story, it lays bare a profound contradiction that illuminates, indeed summarizes, all of American history from Jamestown to World War II and beyond. The nuclear family has been, from the start, the basic building block of American society; it made possible the westward movement, the clearing of the continent, the establishment of organized community life. The spiritual cement of this family has been termed the Protestant (or Puritan) Ethic, and it can be summarized as follows:

Work hard.

Idleness is the devil's work.

> Fortune smiles on the thrifty and industrious.
>
> The reason for sex is to propagate the race and to provide heirs to family property. Extramarital sex and offspring contradict the concept of the nuclear family and the identifiable heir. Such relations, unblessed by the church and not recorded by it, are sinful.
>
> The poor are always with you. Be charitable to them, and relieve their needs.

The nuclear family and the Protestant Ethic had been very effective, until the twentieth century, in peopling the country, settling it, and in launching the younger generations on the path of independent life and career. This family, this ethic, was the matrix of our society. Then comes 1929, and the whole family structure suddenly becomes not so much inadequate as irrelevant. Can hard work cope with the total economic paralysis of the Depression? Can thrift safeguard a family when life savings are wiped out overnight? Can parental love be enough to protect or launch youth into the world when there are no jobs? An institution that is a source of strength in one period of history may have quite a different meaning under different circumstances. There is a contradiction between the family as a unit of social organization and the new dimension of catastrophe which it is powerless to cope with.

Again, an ideology which is a source of strength at one time may be a liability at another. The protestantism that had inspired men and women to seek the land of promise, to suffer and die for it, may now induce a paralyzing inertia which serves to perpetuate social crisis rather than solve it. At the end of the novel, Mr. Morrison says,

> "I don't know why we have good times and bad times, prosperity and depressions, drought and rain, why some people die and others live. But I guess I'd have to be the Lord God Himself to know all those things." (Popular Library paperback, 1970, p. 200)

Note also the character of Uncle Calvin; idle, shiftless, a moocher, he is introduced as a foil to set off more vividly the family virtues of the Morrisons. He embodies the Protestant Ethic too; he is as he is because he is not "chosen," because he has a special share of original sin. Says Mr. Morrison,

> "Maybe your Uncle Calvin would have been different if he had found the right girl, fallen in love and got married and raised a family. But he didn't. Don't ask me why. He always had a wild streak in him, and I didn't--even when we were little boys. He used to get three whippings to my one." (p. 199)

Against this family backdrop the significance of the New Deal becomes clearer--the abandonment of laissez faire and the involvement of the federal government in the effort to solve problems that are now national rather than local in dimension, public rather than private. The book cannot be adequately understood unless we explain to the students what the AAA was and the assumptions upon which it was based--the re-establishment of the profitability of agricultural production through the destruction of surpluses, the limitation of crops, and the raising of prices to the consumer.

But this policy, that of the first New Deal (1933-34), aroused the fury of the American people because of its obvious irrationality and cruelty. What was the point of driving sheep over cliffs when millions had no meat? Or what was the point of ploughing under cotton when millions were shivering in rags? Hence the forward movement, under popular pressure, to the second New Deal (1935-37), which made historical contributions like the Wagner Act and the concept of social security.

Thus the novel opens up the need to discuss not only the early New Deal period but the later. It thus helps us to illuminate the entire era from 1929 to 1939.

E. World War II and the Dawn of the Atomic Age

We discussed the possibility of using John Hersey's Hiroshima. On one level, it translates the holocaust into the experience of six human beings. On another, it illuminates the meaning of the new era in history. Alternatively, there is The Diary of Ann Frank.

Hiroshima

We devoted a whole session to discussing how to use Hersey's book. Following are some of the main points that were brought out:

1) There are special and peculiar barriers to be overcome by American students who want to get into this book (American teachers, too!): primarily the strangeness of the names, the need to make them familiar and to link them with actual images of people. So:

a) Rehearse students in the names, not only until they become familiar, but until the students can appreciate the beauty, melody, and simplicity of the Japanese sound. It's not so hard--just accent the penultimate syllable: TOSHÍKO SASÁKI, MASAKÁZU FÚJII

b) Then try to make word-pictures of the six characters in the book, being sure in the discussion to repeat the names constantly; and identify them by obvious features--hair parted in the middle, mustache, glasses. Have the students, or some of them, give their impressions in actual sketches on paper, and post up the best of these, or reproduce them by Xerox; it will help enormously. As a matter of fact, you can try two sets of sketches. One set, as

it were, preliminary, at the beginning of the study, could be if necessary little more than caricatures. Another set could be drawn after the study and discussion has been completed. Perhaps the drawings will reflect the students' developing insight.

2) A second barrier that needs to be overcome is the "stop and start" quality of the writing, which constantly moves from one participant to the next. This may have been appropriate for the book in its original form, New Yorker articles, but for sustained reading it is difficult. Thus in class it may be desirable to take a different approach. Divide the students into six groups, or salvage teams. Have each team follow through one assigned person. They are, in a sense, to read their way through this waste land, looking for one person and tracing out what happens, from start to finish, to that one person. This is a sneaky way of doing it because in actuality, of course, each team will have to read the whole book. But they have a principle of organization to guide them, because they are looking for one specific person. They will then report on "their" person, perhaps even write up a collective report on that person's disaster biography.

It is the teacher's business to familiarize himself with this biography, in written form, before it is reported upon in class, to make sure that it is accurate, concise, and pungent. The exchange, orally, of the six disaster reports can then greatly enrich all the students' understanding of the disaster. They will approach it together, not just as separate people. This is imperative when we are tackling something so overwhelmingly painful that it takes an effort to face it. It is easier to face it together.

3) Once these preliminaries are done, it is the role of the teacher to keep quiet (this is very difficult). Let the questions come from the students. But a minimum of preliminary information may be given--e.g., the location of Japan, and of Hiroshima. What questions, beyond this, ought we expect students to be asking? What questions should we be fishing for?

Why was the United States fighting Japan in the first place? This question will make it appropriate to introduce a "track-laying" lecture on The Roots of the American Presence in the Pacific. Use Albert Beveridge's revealing speech of 1900 (reproduced in full in Living Documents, Volume 2, cited above).

Is it right or expedient to kill civilians in time of war? I wish we had taped our discussion of this question--it was fascinating! One viewpoint expressed was that yes, in some sense, the Japanese civilians were "guilty." The question was then raised: Guilty of what? And the answer, of course, was "guilty of supporting their government in time of war." Question: How does that "guilt" differ from the guilt of British, American, or German civilians during World War II?

If people are guilty of supporting a wrongful war, does that justify their extermination?

Do you distinguish between governmental war guilt and people's guilt? As a nation, of course, we do; the precedent was established very clearly at Nuremberg. We tried a handful of Nazis for a new international crime--conspiracy to unleash aggressive war.

If the bomb introduces a new philosophy and ethic of war, against whom is it directed? Obviously enough, against the initiator himself, as much as against the victim.

4) It might be possible to set up an "historical panel" to review President Truman's decision to drop the bomb. The panel would have to hear debate on both sides of the question--for and against dropping the bomb--and then would have to hand down a reasoned decision. Notwithstanding this outcome, the aim of such a form would be to explore the question, not to settle it.

Did, e.g., the dropping of the bomb actually accelerate the end of the war?

Or was a rapid end of the war guaranteed, in any event, by the closing in of American, British, and Soviet forces with the collapse of the European front?

How do you weigh the loss of 200,000 Japanese civilian lives against the military losses that would have been inevitable in an actual invasion of Japan?

Was the dropping of the bomb a genuine act of war, or a military experiment?

Why was it not dropped on Tokyo?

5) Check the perceptiveness of the students in reading Hiroshima as a Canto out of the Inferno. Perhaps they can write a page or two telling the incidents that made the most impression upon them. This should not be done orally (for obvious reasons). Examples: the death of Mrs. Kamai's baby (p. 53); the silence of human anguish in Asano Park--"the hurt ones were quiet; no one wept, much less screamed in pain; no one complained; none of the many who died did so noisily; not even the children cried" (p. 47); the symptoms of radiation sickness; the anti-aircraft soldiers.

6) Sometime at this point the "track-laying" can be completed. We have traced the roots of U.S. presence in Asia; now make the connection with the European war in terms of the rise of Hitler, the anti-Hitler coalition, two-front war in Europe, the collapse of Germany, and the concentration upon Japan--Enemy #2.

7) Somewhere--perhaps earlier--we have to explain the physical basis of the catastrophe; involve outside resources from science department or University to explain in popular, dramatic terms atomic structure, fission, fusion, radioactivity.

8) A map of old Hiroshima will be a help. (Try Rand Castile, Japan Society of America, 333 East 47th Street, New York, N.Y.)

9) The atomic flash announces a new historical era. What are its characteristics? Put it another way: How does this generation feel that it differs from previous ones--what specifically is new about this era that sets it apart?

I wish we had taped this discussion! As I remember, what we did was to explore the concept of atomic power as an environmental revolution, explore the relationship of this technological and scientific change to people and community physically, culturally, and spiritually. Questions were raised, for example, about the relationship of nuclear power to the drug culture, to the Protestant Ethic, to the youth culture and life style.

F. The Postwar Era

There would be nothing wrong with ending the course with E (the atomic era) and the survival questions that it presents. But, if time permits, it is possible to experiment with other books that illuminate the postwar era and bring the story up to date. Two possibilities were suggested:

a) Ring Lardner, Jr. The Ecstasy of Owen Muir. (New American Library paperback; 1972 reissue of work originally published in 1954). To my mind, this is the best single exposition of Cold War ideology, but it is a devastating satire. It might be hard to use both on account of the sarcasm and on account of the specific target--conservative Catholicism.

b) Fletcher Knebel. Seven Days in May. (Bantam paperback, 1963). The theme of this novel is "The Constitution in Danger"--from a military dictatorship and takeover centered in the Pentagon. It is a gripping story and it raises a central question of the entire postwar era: the rise of a permanent war economy and the relationship of this to the struggle for, and the survival of, democratic liberties.

Track-Building

The above books in A through F, and books like them, offer deep illumination of the entire American historical scene. But the different periods treated need to be linked together and appropriate historical background also offered. In this context, we discussed "track-building." If the text is too long, too dull, too heavy, and too dry, we can throw it away and provide the essential chronology and narrative in lecture form. There is nothing wrong with the lecture form if it plays a subordinate role and does not become a substitute for the student's own work, thought, and initiative. On the contrary, it offers a forum where history can be dramatized and where students and teachers can work together. A given

lecture, for example, might utilize the talents of several teachers or students; it could provide a narrative with one voice, quotations from speeches, eyewitness accounts, etc., with others. Slides could be used, to go along with this, as could songs and music. The possibilities of the lecture as art form are limited only by the ingenuity of students and teachers, and the time available for preparation.

But in this way, with only relatively few lectures, not more than, say, a dozen during the year, it might be possible to provide an entire chronological sequence, and essential historical fact, for the entire period of the course, 1850 to the present.

Recommendations

1) The primary condition for developing this course is that the members of the team work together even more closely than they have in the past, and that they get together to think through the materials they are using and to prepare their teaching both conceptually and practically. This means that they should be free for at least two days a month to meet and work together without interruption or teaching or administrative burdens.

2) Time is needed in the summer to examine new material, to think it through, to plan the course, and to organize lectures. For such summer work, of course, it is imperative to find financing so that all members of the team may participate, and may be required to participate, without economic loss.

3) The teachers at Sylvania carry the same punishing daily burden as teachers in most public schools in this country (with some possible exceptions in California). This being so, and given the experimental and pioneering nature of the Sylvania humanities course, further advance and success would seem to be conditional, in part, upon the provision of short sabbatical leaves for all members of the team in rotation so that they may be able to conduct the constant daily study without which teaching and educational experimentation of the highest order cannot be carried through.

4) Student self-examination is becoming apparent in this course. A student, that is, who makes a film, organizes a slide show, paints a picture, or draws a series of cartoons gives you a far better way to know him and to evaluate him than the mass of conventional tests that burden student and teacher alike. To liberate both students and teachers from the grade-crazy past, the administration, at least insofar as this course is concerned, needs to think through again its whole policy and its system of regulations regarding grades. The fact is that in the Sylvania experimental course existing grade requirements have, in my opinion, become an obstacle to creative innovation on the part of students and faculty alike. In the significant words of the Wingspread Report:

New ways of evaluating student development will have to be looked for: We, together with our students, will have to find them. Ideally, students should examine rather than be examined. The "test" that we should be seeking ought to be the fruit of this process of examination; it may be the creation of the group itself, like a piece of sculpture or a folk opera. It may even be an oration, delivered on a street corner, to "scorning men."

The elaboration of such fresh, warmer, more creative types of expression as ways to assess student growth, presents a new challenge to us as teachers: It defines yet one more critical element in the dimensions of the "new" social studies. (Teaching for a Change, p. 192)

THE NATIONAL HUMANITIES FACULTY, 1266 MAIN STREET, CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01742 / (617) 369-7800

NHF WORKING PAPERS

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Is the humanities course already becoming nothing more than a slightly modified social studies course? Can a different approach direct it toward more basic learning and the acquisition of more fundamental skills than the mere temporary accumulation of quickly forgotten facts?

Professor John Cawelti, Professor of English and Humanities at The University of Chicago and chairman of the University Committee on General Studies in the Humanities, after visiting a number of schools as an NHF consultant, offers his thoughts and his reasons for them.

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Let me begin with one or two things which bother me about the approach that so many schools seem to be taking. First of all, the basic structure of the humanities course (or any course) seems to focus primarily on the dispensing of information--in one grade information about Africa, for example; in another grade about Russia; and in another about a particular period of American history. I would certainly agree that the dispensing of information is an important educational function. One of the most often heard and legitimate criticisms of our educational system is that students come out of it very poorly informed about all sorts of things. However, the difficulty is that information without motivation and conceptualization is soon forgotten.

I suspect that the reason our students are ill-informed is not that they have not been exposed to the information but that they haven't learned its significance or how to organize and use it in meaningful inquiry. You propose to remedy this situation by making the information all bear on one general topic, that is, Africa, or Russia, or nineteenth-century America. This will, it is hoped, make more sense to the students than if they were studying African history in one course, American literature in another, and weather in a third. But I fear that the central weakness of this approach is that you will tend to place on the students the hardest burden of all, the organizing and integrating of diverse bits of information. My real feeling is that this is what should be at the center of your curriculum--not information, but frameworks for the organizing and integrating of information.

The second thing which bothers me is the way in which the arts and, in some schools, science are being integrated into the humanities program. I sense that, with the best will in the world, the science and art people are having some difficulty fitting in their disciplines. Their contribution seems to be at times rather arbitrary, at most only a unit or two, an interlude in the regular curriculum. Thus, for example, the science teacher offers some information on African climate and topography, or the math teacher presents graphs and statistics of various aspects of Russian society, the idea being, I suppose, that the techniques of graphing and statistics will be more interesting to the students if they are related to the material they were discussing in social studies. Similarly, the creative arts teachers contribute some information on the history of Russian art and assist the students in cooking up some Russian meals. Yet I have had the feeling that neither the science people nor the arts people really feel fully integrated into the program, nor should they necessarily feel so, since what the program calls upon them to present is not science or art, but information derived from science and art.

Thus, a basic problem arises when one seeks to create an interdisciplinary program which takes its central organization from a single discipline. That is fine if we are prepared to accept the idea that

education consists of learning that particular discipline, or if we believe that one discipline is more important than the others. Actually, I'm inclined to believe that one of the peculiar biases of American culture is the tendency to rank social studies as the most important intellectual discipline. Thus, it is not surprising that your group would think of this as the most appropriate and most "natural" form of curricular organization. Many of the first general humanities courses, such as the famous survey courses taught at Columbia and the University of Chicago in the 1930's, were essentially conceived along the lines of what we would today think of as a social studies orientation. These courses were organized around a historical presentation of major areas of world culture, and historical chronology more or less determined how everything would be presented, the arts, the sciences, philosophy, etc. These courses were exciting and most students found them very stimulating. They felt that they had been introduced to whole new worlds of exciting facts while at the same time they were given the impression that they now understood the essence of universal history. These courses were kaleidoscopic in character and tried to fit everying in. In a way, they were like those experimental movies which present a new image in each frame and can thereby present over three thousand different images in three minutes. With such a technique film makers could show us the world history of art in five minutes. But it does tend to remain a blur.

There seem to me to be three major difficulties with this kind of course: 1) they present students with too much data which the student is quite unprepared to integrate in any very meaningful fashion; 2) they make the student totally dependent on the teacher's system of analyzing and integrating data without encouraging him to develop his own skills of interpretation and analysis; 3) they tend to reduce several different modes of thought and inquiry to one.

On the other hand, such courses have a number of advantages: 1) they provide a simple principle of organization which is readily comprehensible to anybody, that is, historical chronology; 2) within this framework an exciting variety of bits of information can be set forth, thus keeping up a continual procession of new stimuli; 3) anything can be pressed into a chronological organization; consequently, every discipline can relate itself in some way to this structural mode; 4) this mode requires a minimum of coordination between teachers in different areas; each one can do his own thing, so long as it fits into the chronological scheme. In general, then, the social studies orientation provides the easiest and most readily comprehensible mode of organization, but it risks superficiality and makes it more difficult to encourage students to develop their own interpretive and analytical skills.

What would be the alternative to this sort of curriculum? I think that its central feature would be integration through differentiation rather than through synthesis. In other words, the students

would come to understand the relationship between the major disciplines by coming to understand more fully how different human structures of creation, inquiry, and argumentation are carried on and what different as well as similar problems these structures are addressed to. The method of instruction would be in the classical mold of progressive education, "learning by doing." Students would confront problems of analysis and interpretation so constructed as to be at least partially dealt with by them, and after attempting to carry on their own inquiry, their attention would be called to appropriate models at increasing levels of difficulty and sophistication. The materials for this process of education would be alternatively problems designed in such a way that the students could begin to handle them at their own level of competence, and carefully selected works of literature, history, philosophy, rhetoric, etc. which would provide examples of the different interpretive and analytical skills one wants the students the begin developing. At various points, as they began to understand the practice of the different disciplines, students should be encouraged to apply a number of disciplines to the same area so that they might begin to understand the characteristic potentialities and limitations of different kinds of analysis and interpretation, for example, the historical as opposed to the philosophical, the poetic as opposed to the sociological.

I feel that it would be inappropriate for me to prescribe what the most important interpretive and analytical skills are and the way in which they might be practiced by students. But in order to flesh out the abstract generalizations of the proceding paragraph just a bit, let me suggest how one might proceed in relation to a couple of intellectual structures which might be defined as interpretive and analytical skills, to wit, history, and the interpretation of imaginative works in literature and art. (I exclude music for the time being because it poses special problems for most students.)

History is, of course, a good deal concerned with information and there is a sense in which we might say that the most historically learned person is one who knows the most facts about the past and can put them in the right order. However, that can only take one so far. An individual who could recite all possible historical facts in chronological order would soon reduce his audience if not himself to desperate measures. The facts must be articulated by ideas about how they should be ordered and which are most important, etc. Usually, these ideas take the form of hypotheses about particular chains of cause and effect which are in turn based on general views about the nature of cause and effect in human affairs.

Therefore, one history will differ from another either in terms of the historian's treatment of particular chains of cause and effect, or in his general assumptions about what the major historical forces are. Thus, the interpretation of history involves both the interpretation of particular historical circumstances and the interpretation of "histories," that is, of the articulated structure created by historians. To make meaningful judgments about history is a complex skill and involves not only knowing a lot of facts, but being able to make one's own inferences and deductions from them, so that one is not totally at the mercy of whatever the currently popular historical myths are.

(Cf. See Carl Becker's essay "Everyman His Own Historian.") This would seem to be a particularly important skill for citizens of a democratic society who are continually being asked to consent to particular governmental actions on the ground of various historical arguments. The problem then is to teach the students history in the fullest sense, teaching them not only a set of historical facts along with the conventional interpretations of these facts, but more importantly, developing their own skills of historical argument, that is, leading them to a perception of some of the complexities of cause and effect in human affairs. How to do this?

I would begin with some historical configurations to which the students have direct access, and where they cannot fall back on the convenient generalizations offered by a textbook or encyclopedia. Personal history would be ideal for this purpose. If students have trouble being open about that, possibly some aspect of local history or family history might be substituted. The teacher would very carefully guide students toward formulating appropriate questions through class discussion, accumulating materials and data in a variety of ways on their own, and then again through class discussion, helping them to draw inferences about causes and effects from the material gathered. This beginning project should be kept quite simple with as much time as necessary taken to explore as many ways as possible of defining significant events and chains of cause and effect. Only after the students have worked through a historical problem of this sort on their own would I expose them to the facts and generalizations offered by history books.

If we might assume for the moment that this initial project might involve personal history in some fashion, the next problem I would develop would be a critical analysis of a biographical account or possibly an autobiographical account of some other person. For instance, at this point, one might tackle a biographical account of some major figure in American history written at an appropriate level for the student. It might be interesting, for example, to let the students work over some obviously dubious biographical account like Parson Weems' life of George Washington, as well as a more reputable recent account, in order to analyze the different approaches these works take to the construction of a personal history.

I'd hope that by dealing with history in this way, the students would begin to grasp the nature of historical argument and interpretation in relation to material that was within their own experience and grasp. I would then branch out through the exploration of an increasingly more complex series of problems in history (and social studies). Each new phase would presumably increase the variety and complexity of causal factors to be considered, the level of generalization involved, and the quantity of information involved in the problem.

One possible way of thinking about this would be to move from the personal and the local to an exploration of a national history, such as that of the United States, and from that to a consideration of the

special problems involved in constructing a history of a different culture and period, and then, finally, to the discussion of history on a larger scale, such as that of the relation between nations, or how one can talk meaningfully about general trends in world history. Another way of broadening one's scope is to talk about progressively more complex interrelations of factors, the political, the economic, the religious, the sociological, etc. Whatever the progression, each unit would combine the students' own construction and treatment of a historical problem with critical analysis of appropriate models from historical literature at different levels.

Let me now turn to that complex of skills that has to do with the interpretation and analysis of imaginative works of art. This set of skills has a number of things in common with history--for example, stories are usually in the form of accounts of what happened to certain people and why--but there are two major differences: a) in interpreting stories of paintings, we are not so much concerned with the particular truth of what is represented, but with its general truth to life as we understand it; and b) in understanding a work of art as such as are concerned with that whole realm of things loosely described as artistic values--the form of the work, its use of the medium, its adequacy to our sense of beauty, etc. Therefore, while some of the same techniques of interpretation are appropriate to art and history, some are not. We are likely to miss something basic if we reduce history to art, or art to history. As I noted above, one meaning of integration is the clear understanding of the differences involved in various modes of thought. So our program must have built into it some means for coming to an understanding of the basic similarities and differences between the interpretation of creative works and the analysis of historical structures. This might, in fact, be a good point for beginning to explore the skills of artistic interpretation. If the students had constructed, as suggested above, some kind of personal history, one might then ask them whether there is any other way in which they might imagine making a statement about themselves and life. This discussion could lead to a very open kind of assignment in which the students were encouraged to make a statement about themselves in a considerable variety of forms, choosing the mode of expression which seemed most comfortable to them. A selection of these projects should then be discussed in class, with students other than the creator of the project talking about what they got from it, and then setting these observations over against the creator's own interpretation of his project.

I realize that this will be extremely slow going at first, worse than pulling teeth, for students at any age have strong positive or negative reactions to things, but they do not begin to understand these reactions until they have been forced to articulate them verbally. Then, they begin to develop interpretative skills, and, I think, become increasingly interested in using them and in sharing their more personal perceptions of works of art with others. But one must be very patient in starting this process and, above all, one must continually stress that this is an area in which there are no single right answers--only what

might be called "helpful" answers, insights which give us a richer understanding of a particular work, again a central difference from history.

The student's development of skills in the interpretation of imaginative work naturally tends to move in tandem with his mastery of basic mechanical skills in the language of arts since language is the medium for the arts of fiction and poetry and a primary element in the mixed media of drama, film and television. Because of this it is inevitable that these various forms of literature should play a major role in the curriculum, but the interpretation of music and the visual arts as imaginative creations should not be totally neglected. In fact, it will be important where possible to create problems of interpretation in the different arts which have some parallel elements--for example, the analysis of stories told verbally and visually (Are there things analogous to shape and color in verbal language? Are there things analogous to vocabulary and syntax in visual representations? Etc.). Through such discussions, the students may gain some perspective on the nature of language that will assist them in learning how to use it effectively.

The development of the imaginative art component of the curriculum should follow the same basic principle suggested in the case of history--moving from the simple to the complex. In the case of the interpretative disciplines necessary for the fullest understanding of imaginative literature, this means a movement along three major axes: a) the development of progressively greater sensitivity to language; b) the increasing capacity to interpret larger and more complex imaginative structures, which in the case of literature means primarily various forms of plot; c) as in the case of history, the taking in of larger amounts of significant and organized data that makes possible the establishment of a larger variety of meaningful comparisons between one imaginative work and another.

In structuring the curriculum, the basic principle is obviously to move from simpler and shorter poems and stories to more complex and difficult ones. Along with this, one wants to help the students move from creation of their own into creative interpretative relationships with the works of superb writers and artists. They also need to learn something about how to deal critically with the standard kinds of entertainment and escapism which will become an important part of their own cultural life. In fact, such works, being generally simpler in language and structure, might be a good place to begin the imaginative part of the curriculum.

The most difficult problem here is probably how one establishes a sequence of works which suggest meaningful comparisons and which therefore build up as an organized body of data. There are three main methods that have been used for this. Personally, I favor the generic approach which establishes sequences of works that have comparable structures (for example, a series of sonnets, of tragedies, of detective stories). Other teachers favor a thematic approach, in which one deals

with a variety of works which seem to be treating the same theme. Still others employ the traditional historical-cultural method, in which works are selected by virtue of their having been produced in the same period or by the same culture. This last approach seems the least satisfactory to me because, first, it tends to reduce aesthetic considerations to historical ones and, second, it calls on students to make the kind of interpretive judgments they are least well prepared to do. Good interpretations of the relation between a work of art and its historical background require some sophistication in both history and literature, qualities possessed by few students at this level. Therefore, dealing with literature in this way necessitates that the student take the teacher's word for an interpretive judgment without being able to participate in the process of arriving at that judgment himself.

I think instead that this kind of integration between historical and literary skills should be a culmination of the curriculum rather than its basic principle of organization. After the student has learned to construct and criticize historical arguments and to interpret individual works of literature, then he should be more ready to understand how these skills can be used in a more complex process of inquiry, that is, in exploring how the literature and art of a particular period can give us some insight into the historical factors at work in that period, or how a knowledge of the historical background can help us more fully understand certain aspects of a particular work of art.

In sum, the sort of curriculum I suggest is integrated first by the differential development of what you understand to be the most important skills of analysis and interpretation in the areas of science, social studies, and humanities. Then, after the students have learned to practice these skills and to understand something of their potentialities and limitations, their similarities and differences, they are confronted with problems which require the interrelationship of the different skills they have learned. Both differential development of these disciplines of thought and their interrelationship require the most intense kind of coordination and integration on the part of the teachers. The differential development of analytical skills will be most effectively taught by a group of teachers who understand at least in general the different processes of inquiry which each area is primarily responsible for. The art teacher must be able to show the student how the process of creation and analysis he teaches is different from and similar to that which the science teacher is presenting. And when it comes to a problem on which all the disciplines are to focus, each teacher must understand the contribution of the other's discipline to the solution of the problem. To facilitate this, the teachers must educate each other. Thus, the planning periods which I hope will be built into the curriculum on a generous scale should be used as much as possible as seminars focused around the exploration of specific problems which will help the literature teachers to understand the processes of thought involved in science and vice versa. These seminars might also provide an enrichment experience for some of your more gifted students.

THE NATIONAL HUMANITIES FACULTY, 1266 MAIN STREET, CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01742 / (617) 369-7800

NHF WORKING PAPERS

C-102

John Cawelti wrote this report to the humanities team at Baltimore City College, where Don F. Rogerson and his colleagues were developing an eleventh- and twelfth-grade elective sequence encompassing the English and social studies credits as well as other aspects of the humanities. In March 1971, the date of this report, Baltimore City College was an all-male, predominantly black, inner-city school. But Professor Cawelti's thinking is pertinent to the general humanities program in any location.

Professor Cawelti is Chairman, Committee on General Studies in the Humanities, The University of Chicago, and his special field is popular culture.

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THE AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES, AND THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION

Baltimore City College has a tradition of academic excellence that goes back many years. Though in recent years the school has come to serve a predominantly black inner-city population, it has managed to keep many of its first-rate faculty. The humanities team I worked with was undoubtedly the best group of teachers engaged on a project of this kind I have ever encountered. It seemed to me that they brought to their work a combination of training, experience, and enthusiasm that must be rare in American secondary education. Many ideas for humanities courses originate in English departments. The interested members of these departments persuade the principal, who puts pressure on the art and history departments to give faculty time. Too often, these other departments fob off their weaker members on the humanities experiment. In this case, all members of the group were superb teachers and the balance of their personalities and skills made for real excitement, an excitement which manifested itself in the students' obvious interest in the course and in a classroom involvement which was quite extraordinary in comparison with other inner-city schools. This group of teachers is a very creative unit, and I hope the school will do everything it can to keep them together. I found it a very stimulating experience to work with them, and I'm sure that I learned more about teaching from watching them in action than I was able to give back in the form of suggestions about the revision of their courses.

Actually, there are two interdisciplinary courses offered by the group, one at the 11th and one at the 12th grade level. The courses have a degree of separateness in that only the team leader, Mr. Rogerson, teaches with both courses. Aside from him there are two different teams. However, the two staffs operate out of the same room, they have their planning period together, they think of themselves as a single group in many ways. Thus, the two courses assist and stimulate each other. Since the courses are elective there is probably no way of making one course a prerequisite for the other and thereby creating a completely unified sequence. However, there will probably be some students who can take both courses. Thus, aside from the value of advice and inspiration flowing from one group of teachers to the other, there are good educational reasons for encouraging the two courses to work toward as much cooperation in planning as possible. I was strongly moved by the deep sense of rapport and respect that these teachers have for each other and for their students. The creation of this kind of atmosphere seems far more important to me than any substantive details of a program. To this end, it seems to me that the following ideas, which would need to be implemented by school systems, are indispensable to the stimulation of creative innovations in the teaching of the humanities:

I. The highest priority is that the group of teachers must have time for planning their work and for developing their knowledge of new areas. It is not enough for a humanities team to remain a group of fragmented specialists. The English people must get involved with art and history, the

historians with literature, the artists with history, etc. The Baltimore City College group is exceptionally fortunate in having individual specialists of broad humanistic culture and interests and in having gained from the school administration one planning period per day. This practice must be continued at all costs. The class load of high school teachers is too enormous to permit much leisure for reflection and discussion. Without the regular daily provision of planning periods there is little chance for effective coordination between the team members, and no chance of real invention and innovation. In addition, it is very important to give members of the team summer curriculum planning assignments. Most high school teachers must seek out summer employment to meet their expenses. A summer writing assignment not only encourages replanning and reform of humanities courses, but also enables the teachers to learn more about their other areas of the humanities. In many ways, it is more important for the teachers to have the opportunity to teach each other about their respective areas than anything else if one's goal is an effective interdisciplinary program. The NHF could probably play an important role here in helping to arrange for university faculty to lead summer workshop sessions aimed at helping the teaching team discover how they might further develop their own awareness of certain areas, but such workshops would be a poor investment if the school systems are not able to provide the summer time to carry further the ideas they develop.

II. Another basic problem for the teacher at BCC is the limited amount and kind of materials available for humanities instruction. I imagine this is true in most city schools. BCC has had a special problem in that they have not been designated a Title I school and thus have not been eligible for funds for cultural enrichment. I understand that this is in process of being changed. However, there will remain basic material problems. For humanities courses in inner-city schools to be successful, new kinds of materials must be developed and new sorts of resources employed. I found that the BCC humanities team was making imaginative use of community resources in the form of local speakers coming in to discuss some of the major themes of the course with the students. In addition the group was making use of such films and other visual materials as they could lay their hands on. But two special problems remained: the great amount of time required to track down materials, to arrange for speakers, etc.; and the dearth of materials available and appropriate for individual study projects by the students. In relation to the first problem, I have two suggestions:

A. Any school system which hopes to develop significant humanities programs should have a humanities coordinator at the board of education level. Such a person should have the responsibility of fighting for budgetary allocations and other needed policies, such as planning time, as well as insuring that local schools appoint competent persons to the humanities staffs. In addition, a humanities coordinator with a small staff should be able to take much of the burden for arrangements for the use of community resources, such as speakers, museums, etc., off the back of the teachers who should be using this time for their own planning and learning.

B. It would also be very helpful for the humanities staff to have access to some secretarial services for the purpose of making arrangements for speakers, duplicating materials, etc. The point is that, while the teachers do these things when necessary, the very fact that they have to call up the speakers, grind out the dittos, etc., in addition to their other responsibilities means that the amount of imaginative materials of this kind that can be prepared is less than could be. Possibly some use of para-professional or even student assistance might be valuable in this connection.

With respect to the second problem, that of the kind of materials available, the problem is essentially this. City schools have a special need for humanities materials other than books, that is, audio-visual aids and other devices by which students can be encouraged to pursue interests in the humanities on their own. But these are also the schools which have the greatest budgetary limitations on expenses of this kind. They cannot afford expenditures on fancy hardware which will turn out to be of minimal use. Here I think NHF could make a very useful contribution by bringing together a panel of high school and university humanities people which would be charged with surveying new educational materials in the humanities and with thinking up ways in which materials for study could be generated for minimal costs; in particular the panel should be responsible for preparing lists of basic equipment and materials which would comprise the minimum effective combination of books, films, records, tapes, and equipment for various kinds of basic humanities courses.

III. I found the BCC teachers extremely eager to find out what other humanities programs were like and to exchange ideas about how and what to teach. School systems should be encouraged to help their teachers attend professional meetings by paying expenses, but I think a program of visiting would be even more valuable in many ways because academic meetings have a tendency to turn into marketplaces of everything but ideas. I would strongly suggest that NHF think about the possibility of having teachers from one high school visit others, perhaps in conjunction with visits from university humanities people. For example, I think it would have been extremely interesting and useful if a teacher from a different high school had been in Baltimore along with me.

IV. Finally, I think there is great potential value in some degree of student involvement in the planning of humanities courses. I suggested to the BCC group that they might arrange for the election of a student committee to meet with them from time to time to make suggestions and to help judge the effectiveness of the different components of the course. I also raised the question with the students. Both teachers and students were quite enthusiastic about the possibility and planned to implement it as soon as possible. I will be interested to see how this worked out when I return to Baltimore in June.

So much for general ideas about arrangements useful to support innovative humanities programs. It will be noted that I did not mention what is in many minds the most obvious educational problem of all: the excessively large number of students to faculty. Clearly anything that can be done about this is all to the good. Nevertheless, I did observe in Baltimore that an imaginative group of teachers with time to plan and the freedom to implement different kinds of teaching techniques, ranging from large lectures to small discussion groups led by the students themselves, can carry on effective educational programs even with large numbers of students. The 12th grade class that I observed had about 90 students, yet the classroom decorum and participation was exceptionally high and the sense of rapport between students and teachers was very strong.

Let me turn now to the specific content of the courses I observed. Of the various ways in which interdisciplinary humanities courses can be conceived, these BCC courses follow what I have come to believe the best lines for courses at this level and for this kind of student, that is, the student's own self-awareness is placed at the center of the course; he is encouraged by a sequence of themes or problems assumed to be of direct and immediate concern to him to arrive at a greater definition and articulation of his own philosophy of life and from there to some awareness of alternative world views or cultural possibilities. At the same time, the student is trained in skills of analysis and expression which hopefully make sense to him because he has felt the need of more clearly articulating his own point of view. This is essentially the "Who Am I?" approach to the humanities which has been so effectively spread by Charles Keller over the past several years. It can be objected to on two main grounds: a) because it fails to focus the student's attention of systematic training in the basic humanistic disciplines of aesthetics, philosophy, history, and rhetoric, it does not effectively prepare him for further serious inquiry, and b) because it does not give the student a systematic treatment of the history of western civilization, it does not effectively enable him to understand our cultural heritage and to rise beyond his immediate concerns to a larger view of humanity. However, even if it should be granted that there is some intellectual preference to be given either to the disciplinary or the historical approach to the humanities, it is clear that these approaches are largely ineffective with these students. Moreover, some kind of meaningful self-awareness necessarily precedes any effective larger understanding, and it is one central aspect of the present cultural situation that black students, if not the great majority of American young people, face a number of serious conflicts of self-definition. Therefore, there is no question in my mind that the approach chosen by the BCC humanities group is the correct one for them.

Thus, far from recommending any drastic changes in their general approach to the humanities, I would encourage to BCC team to continue developing the approach they are now using. I did have a few specific suggestions to offer the group by way of revising certain units or using different kinds of

materials, and I expect we will work out some further ideas together during my second visit. I will comment in more detail on those changes after my later visit.

Without getting into specifics, two general problems about the organization and content of the course seem worthy of comment, and I might note that these were problems the teachers were fully aware of and trying to solve. First, if we say that some greater degree of self-awareness and understanding is a basic goal of the humanities, we can also say, I think, that this goal is not really accomplished until the individual had developed some capacity for self-transcendence principally through discovering in a rich and complex way his capacity for imaginative sympathy and identification with other individuals and ways of life both in the present and in the past. This is both an intellectual and a psychological process; it involves the possession of certain kinds of information and the ability to make appropriate inferences from it. It also requires the ability to suspend immediate impulses of fear and desire and a willingness to consider opposing points of view. It is clearly very difficult to get this group of students to engage in reflective thought of this sort. For example, I observed that the students became quite excited when discussing ideas that had a direct bearing on their immediate ethical and social concerns; they were, for example, ready to argue at great length Aristotle's proposition that happiness requires a complete life because this related to their concern with what their own lives should be. Yet it seemed evident that any kind of historical reflection turned them off. Several students told me that the Kenneth Clark series of films on Western Civilization seemed utterly irrelevant to them. How does one create a program that can take students a step beyond the fuller articulation of their immediate concerns as a young person and a black to some larger awareness and identification with man's achievements and failures throughout the ages? None of us was quite sure, though several interesting ideas came up in our discussions that we hope to develop further. The second problem is that of getting the students to have some realization of sustained inquiry, of what it is like to work a problem through to a degree that one can achieve some real mastery of it. Part of the difficulty of a topically organized course is that it tends to bounce from one thing to another without really carrying through any single topic in all its complex ramifications. We did talk about setting up a highly structured kind of independent inquiry to run through a long period, to have several steps, and to eventuate in some kind of original paper. We also talked about the possibility of having an alternate culture to contemporary America running through all the topics and thereby providing another kind of sustained inquiry throughout the course.

In sum, my experience at Baltimore was an enormously stimulating one to me and I left with the sense that there were a lot of ideas in the air and that I had been with a group of teachers who were engaged in the most exciting kind of educational creativity. I am eagerly looking forward to my return visit in June.

John G. Cawelti